



Location - From the junction of U.S. 95 at New Meadows along Idaho 55 south to Idaho 44 west of Boise.

Length - 111.7 miles. Allow 2 hours, 15 minutes.

Roadway - Narrow, winding, two-lane, paved road with occasional passing lanes and slow vehicle turnouts.

When to see it - Throughout the year. The McCall Winter Carnival takes place in late January or early February.

Special attractions - Guided float trips on the Payette River; Cascade Reservoir; snowmobiling and cross-country skiing at Smiths Ferry; Ponderosa State Park on Payette Lake; Brundage Mountain Ski Area; Boise and Payette National Forests.

Camping - Ponderosa State Park, Cascade Reservoir, several campsites north of Banks area and north of McCall area.

Services - Full services in Boise, Cascade, Donnelly, McCall, New Meadows; partial services in Horseshoe Bend.

Contacts - Boise National Forest: 208-373-4007; Payette National Forest: 208-634-0700, www.mccall.net/pnf/; McCall Visitors Bureau: 208-634-7631; Ponderosa State Park: 208-634-2164. For more byway information go to: PRSB@sageidaho.com.

Payette River Scenic Byway

From the junction of Idaho 44 and Idaho 55 west of Idaho's capital city of Boise, this byway heads north on Idaho 55 to Horseshoe Bend where it meets the Payette River. From there, it passes through the Boise and Payette National Forests and the popular resort towns of Cascade and McCall before reaching the northern end of the byway at New Meadows.

For motorists, it can be a distracting drive as the river crashes and tumbles its way over the rocks through this narrow river valley. Depending on where you are on the river, it can be a mild ripple or a wild torrent. There are occasional pull-offs where you can view the wilder parts and treat your senses to the sight, sound, smell, and rhythm of Idaho's famous whitewater.

Along this byway are some great locations for camping, hiking, boating, fishing, and guided float trips. Outfitters offer river excursions that range from half-day to three-day outings in rafts or kayaks.

The mountain resort town of McCall sits next to Payette Lake and is a great year-round getaway. It is particularly famous for the annual Winter Carnival, when the streets are lined with ice sculptures.

